Implications of increasing urbanization

†2616. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the increasing urbanization has posed the crisis of non-availability of cultivable land in the country;

(b) whether starvation like situation is arising for the farmers due to increasing commercial activities on the cultivable land in Haryana which is mainly a wheat producing State; and

(c) what plan is being mooted by Government to save the cultivable land?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) As per available estimate, there is a marginal decline in the cultivable land from 183.14 million ha. in 2001-02 to 182.57 million ha. in 2005-06. During the same period, area under non-agricultural uses has increased from 24.07 million ha. to 24.94 million ha. in the country. The decline in the cultivable land is mainly due to increase in population, diversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes such as urbanization, roads, industries etc. in the country.

In case of Haryana, the cultivable land has marginally increased from 3.776 million ha. in 2001-02 to 3.780 million ha. in 2005-06. During the same period area under non-agricultural uses has increased from 0.425 million ha. to 0.479 million ha. in the State.

(c) Government of India is implementing various Watershed Development Programmes namely, (i) National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA), (ii) Soil Conservation for Enhancing the Productivity of Degraded Lands in the Catchments of River Valley Project and Flood Prone River (RVP and FPR), (iii) Reclamation of Alkali Soil (RAS), (iv) Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSCA), (v) Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP), (vi) Desert Development Programme (DDP), (vii) Integrated Waste-land Development Project (IWDP) for development of degraded lands in the country. Under the above programmes, since inception upto the end of Tenth Five Year Plan an area of 50.83 million hectare has been, developed and part of such developed land is also brought under cultivation to maintain balance in different type of land uses.

Application of new technologies in agriculture

2617. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Agriculture can be made globally competitive by application of new technologies especially space technology;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.